

Town of Newfields
First Session of the 2010 Annual Meeting
Deliberative Session -February 3, 2010

Board of Selectmen:
Wesley T. Moore, Chairman
Michael Woodworth
Rosanne C. Gilbert

William Davis, Moderator
Sue McKinnon, Town Clerk

Moderator Davis called the meeting to order at 7:02pm and called for a pledge of allegiance. The head table was introduced and a few administrative rules were reviewed.

Article 1. Shall the Town of Newfields raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the Warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling One million, five hundred thirty-one thousand, one hundred sixty-six dollars (\$1,531,166.00)? Should this be defeated, the default operating budget shall be One million, five hundred thirty-three thousand, twenty dollars (\$1,533,020.00) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Newfields or by law or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 49:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.

Article 1 was read by the Moderator. A motion was made by Maggie Doane and seconded by Don Doane to accept the article for discussion. Bill explained that we would look at the budget by exception rather than line by line.

Wes Moore thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He stated that the total budget has a less than one percent increase. He recognized the department heads and mentioned that the key component in keeping a level funded budget this year was because of an agreement among all town employees not to take pay raises in 2010. Wes also thanked the budget committee members, Jamie Thompson, Mike Kahlke and John Crisp for their hard work to keep the proposed budget down.

Bill Podszus asked about the \$26,000 overage on legal expenses and whether or not it was due to a one time expense. Wes explained that most of the overages are un-reimbursed legal expenses incurred by the Planning Board. These are legal fees that applicants are required to reimburse to the Town.

The Personnel Administration line was also overspent but it is due to the fact that employee contributions to Fica, medicare, social security, NH retirement and 10% of the health insurance premiums is included in the actual expenditures column.

Don Doane asked which health and human service agencies had been eliminated since

the line item has been decreased by \$1,500.00. Rosanne responded that we did not eliminate any agencies requests we just reduced the amount that we will give each of them.

Chris Sununu commented that the bottom line, the amount to be raised by property taxes has increased \$120,000. Wes explained that this is due to the decrease in revenues. We no longer receive shared revenues from the State. In addition the amount of money that we receive for the rooms and meals tax and highway block grants is expected to decrease significantly this year. The decrease in revenues from the State is estimated to be a total of \$80,000. We did collect \$250,000 in delinquent property taxes which will help offset the tax rate in the fall.

Gayle Spence asked how much money was owed on property taxes and whether or not we had any foreclosures. Sue said that delinquent taxes for the years 2007-2009 are about \$120,000 and there were a few foreclosures.

Win Fream asked about building permits. Sue said there were 3 single-family homes built in 2009 with a total of 54 building permits issued.

With no further discussion on the budget, Article 1 will be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 2. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate Twenty-Two Thousand Dollars (\$22,000.00) for the purpose of mosquito control by town wide adulticiding (truck spraying)?

Article 2 was read by the Moderator. A motion was made by Maggie Doane and seconded by Dave Mason to accept Article 2 for discussion. Wes said that Article 2 & 3 are for the same amounts as last year. Adulticiding is the spraying with the trucks and larviciding is the treatment of the mosquito larvae in the water. The articles are separate because if one fails at least we have some type of protection against EEE. Mosquito spraying began earlier in the season last year and we did spend all the money appropriated for that purpose.

Chris Sununu asked if we had testing done last year and whether or not the tests were positive for EEE. Rosanne said we did have positive test results in different areas of the Town.

Several residents commented that they had noticed a reduction last year in the amount of mosquitoes in their yards.

Ed Scanlon asked if the surrounding towns also spray for mosquitoes.

Sarah MacGregor from Dragon Mosquito and a resident of Newfields said that all surrounding towns with the exception of Epping have a program in place for spraying. Larviciding includes the treatment of the eggs and the capturing and testing of those eggs.

Nancy Spencer commented that any resident who has a garden or beehives and does not

wish to have spraying done may contact Dragon Mosquito in writing with a request.

There was no further discussion and Article 2 will be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 3. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate Thirty-Two Thousand Dollars (\$32,000.00) for the purposes of mosquito control by targeting mosquito larvae (known as larviciding) and Arbovirus Surveillance (known as trapping and testing of mosquitoes)?

Article 3 was read by the Moderator. A motion was made by Dave Mason and seconded by Bill Podszus to accept the article for discussion. Wes commented that the State reimbursed us \$6,800.00 last year for mosquito spraying. Sarah MacGregor added that mosquito borne diseases are on the rise and last year was the worst year on record. With no further discussion, Article 3 will be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 4. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate three hundred, eighty-eight thousand, six hundred and five dollars (\$388,605.00) to purchase a fire truck and authorize the withdrawal of two hundred seventy-eight thousand, forty-seven dollars (\$278,047.00) from the Fire Truck Capital Reserve Fund and fifty-five thousand one, hundred four dollars (\$55,104.00) from the Impact Fee Fund, the remaining fifty-five thousand, four hundred fifty-four dollars (\$55,454.00) to be raised by taxation. (The Selectmen recommend passage of this article.)

Article 4 was read by the Moderator. A motion was made by Maggie Doane and seconded by Don Doane to accept the article for discussion. Fire Chief Jeff Buxton explained that this article is for \$55,454.00.00 to be raised through taxation. Last year was the first time in 20 years that the fire truck capital reserve appropriation was defeated. They were on a schedule of purchasing a fire truck every five years and now it is every 8-9 years. The oldest piece of apparatus is 30 years old and it will not be the one to be replaced. The plan is to replace the 1994 tanker which is difficult to drive, overweight and underpowered. Less than five firemen have the ability to drive the truck. The new tanker will carry six crew members and will hold 2,000 gallons of water. The pumper truck is the first piece of equipment to arrive at a fire and provide the water. If purchased next year the cost would be \$40,000 more according to three different manufacturers. Jeff encouraged people to support the article. For more information on the fire truck purchase go to www.newfieldsfire.org. Jeff added that it is difficult to know how much the town is going to grow but he can't imagine that we would need another major purchase in the next 8 years or so.

Maggie Doane was concerned with the wording of the article to appropriate the full amount of \$388,605.00 and asked if it could be changed. Wes explained that the Department of Revenue Administration requires us to appropriate the full amount to be withdrawn from the capital reserve, impact fee fund and the amount to be raised by taxes. We tried to write it with the amount to be raised through taxation mentioned first but it was not approved by DRA. We need to educate people and get the word out that this article is only for \$55,454.00.

Jeff said that the old truck will be sold when the new truck is operational. The proceeds of approximately \$20,000-\$25,000 would go back into the general fund.

Jen Macpherson asked if the fire department could ask for donations from corporate entities. Jeff explained that they are a town entity not a non-profit organization. Recently the Newfields Fire and Rescue donated \$16,000 to re-do the upstairs of the fire station at no cost to the town and the work was done by the volunteer firemen.

Dave Dwyer asked if a portion of the article could be in bold letters. Mary August suggested adding a ; after impact fee fund. A motion was made by Dave Dwyer and seconded by Bill Podszus to amend the article by inserting a ; after impact fee fund, change the wording to “are the only funds to be raised through taxation” and to bold that portion of the article, providing it is permissible by DRA.

A motion was made by Mary August and seconded by Maggie Doane to vote on the amendment. The article as amended was voted on and passed. Article 4 will be placed on the ballot as amended and will read as follows:

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate three hundred, eighty-eight thousand, six hundred and five dollars (\$388,605.00) to purchase a fire truck and authorize the withdrawal of two hundred seventy-eight thousand, forty-seven dollars (\$278,047.00) from the Fire Truck Capital Reserve Fund and fifty-five thousand one, hundred four dollars (\$55,104.00) from the Impact Fee Fund; **the remaining fifty-five thousand, four hundred fifty-four dollars (\$55,454.00) are the only funds to be raised through taxation.** (The Selectmen recommend passage of this article.)

Article 5. To see if the Town will vote to adopt the blind exemption under the provisions of RSA 72:37 for an exemption from the assessed value of residential property owned by a person who is legally blind, in the amount of Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000.00)? Majority ballot vote required.

Article 5 was read by the Moderator. A motion was made by Maggie Doane and seconded by Dave Mason to accept the article for discussion. Sue explained that the exemption was granted to a resident several years ago and currently no one receives it. The exemption was not properly adopted by a vote of the town and the DRA has requested that we adopt it correctly. Wes added that this is a housekeeping item. A motion was made by Dave Mason and seconded by Dan Conner to move the question. The motion to move carried and the article will be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 6. To see if the Town will vote to allow the library trustees to accept physical donations such as books, flags, furniture, photographs, etc. from a state, federal, or other governmental unit, or from a private source per RSA 202-A:4-d?

Article 6 was read by the Moderator. He also read RSA 202-A:4-d. A motion was made by Don Doane and seconded by Bill Podszus to accept the article for discussion. Library Trustee Kim Crisp explained that the Library Trustees currently do not have the authority to accept gifts. This was brought to the Trustees attention when Bobbi Byrne donated

books to the Library and the Selectmen had to accept them on their behalf. Any donations over \$5,000 would need a public hearing for acceptance. Passage of this article will allow the Library Trustees to accept donations; it would not obligate them to accept donations. Article 6 will be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 7. To see if the Town will vote to appoint the Selectmen as agents to expend from the Fire Truck Capital Reserve Fund previously established in 1984?

Article 7 was read by the Moderator. A motion was made by Maggie Doane and seconded by Dave Mason to accept the article for discussion. Wes explained that the Selectmen and Fire Chief thought it was a good idea to move the agent status from the Town to the Selectmen so that any time during the year if a good deal came around they could move quickly to purchase. The way it is structured now, the town must vote at the annual meeting to remove and spend the money. If the Selectmen are agents they wouldn't have to wait until March to make a purchase. The money would have to be used for a fire truck; the purpose for which it was raised.

Mike Sununu opposes this article. He stated that capital reserves are for long term major purchases. If for some reason the money was needed on short notice a special meeting could be held. This is putting the decision making in the hands of the Selectmen and taking it away from the residents of the Town. It is unnecessary.

Rosanne commented that the money would have to be used for a fire truck and appointing agents is a common practice in other communities.

Trustee Tom Morgan mentioned that moneys would not be released without knowing that the purpose was for the purchase of a fire truck.

Dan Conner stated that the Selectmen cannot just go out and purchase a fire truck without the advice of Fire Chief Jeff Buxton and the authorization of the Trustees of the Trust Funds.

Chris Sununu commented that the issue is not whether or not we want or need a truck. It is the checks and balances on our money. Appointing agents decreases the number of people that have the authority to spend and he believes the town as a whole is a much more effective body. Once we give the Selectmen authority to spend the Capital Reserve Funds there is no getting it back.

A motion was made by Jed Rumford and seconded to move the question. All were in favor and the article will be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 8. By Citizens Petition: To see if the Town will vote to approve the following resolution to be forwarded to our State Representative(s), our State Senator, the Speaker of the House, and the Senate President.

Resolved: The citizens of New Hampshire should be allowed to vote on an amendment to the New Hampshire Constitution that defines "marriage".

The Moderator read Article 8 and mentioned that petitioner Carolyn Scanlon has requested a secret ballot vote for any proposed amendments. A motion was made by Maggie Doane and seconded by Don Doane to accept the article for discussion. Carolyn Scanlon spoke about the petitioned warrant article. She said that NH Legislators are considering amending the constitution to define and recognize the definition of marriage as being the union of one man and one woman. This article is asking voters to send a resolution to state officials asking to be allowed to vote on the definition of marriage. The intent is to send a message to state legislators that the people want to vote on this issue themselves and not have legislators decide it for them.

Mike Sununu commented that this is not the place for this warrant article. If it passes by even one vote, it looks like the whole Town supported it. This is similar to the global warming article that was presented a few years ago and the warrant is not the place for this type of activity.

Rosanne Gilbert commented that the intent of the article is to let people in Concord know how we feel and we want them to listen to us.

Jed Rumford made a motion to move the question. It was seconded and the motion carried.

Carolyn Scanlon made a motion to restrict reconsideration of Article 8 and a second was made by Ed Scanlon. A hand vote was taken and the motion to restrict reconsideration failed to pass.

A motion was made by Mike Sununu and seconded by Chris Sununu to reconsider Article 8. The motion carried and discussion resumed. A motion was made by Mike Sununu and seconded by Win Fream to amend Article 8 to, "To see."

Discussion continued with several residents commenting that the voters should have the right to vote on the question the way it was originally presented.

A secret ballot vote was taken on the amendment. The amendment passed with a vote of yes-25, no-15. Article 8 will be placed on the ballot as amended and will read, "To see."

Article 9. By Citizens Petition: To see if the town will vote to appoint the trustees of the Paul Memorial Library as agents to expend from the Library Building Capital Reserve Fund previously established in the year 2001. (Majority Vote Required)

The moderator read Article 9. A motion was made by Maggie Doane and seconded by Jackie Horgan to accept the article for discussion. Kim Crisp explained that in 2001 the town established a capital reserve fund for the future expansion of the library. There were no agents appointed to expend from the fund and the Library Trustees would like to be appointed. She said that they would not be able to spend the money unless it was for the specific purpose of putting on an addition to the library. Any expenditures would

have to be agreed upon by the Trustees of the Trust Funds; another layer of scrutiny. The current balance of the fund is approximately \$54,000. According to Kim, the State recommends agents be appointed.

Maggie commented that if the funds aren't used for an addition the fund should be dissolved and returned to the general fund. Several residents agreed.

There were concerns that the money would be used for renovating the basement rather than an addition. The purpose of the capital reserve fund could be changed with a warrant article and 2/3 majority vote.

Mike Sununu clarified that if this passes the only people with the authority to spend the money will be the Trustees of the Trust Funds and Library Trustees. This takes the authority away from the town and gives it to a handful of people. It takes the Town out of the process. The agents of the article should be the Town not the Trustees.

A motion was made by Mike Sununu and seconded by Maggie Doane to amend the warrant article to, "To see." The amendment was voted on and passed. Yes-21, No-13 Article 9 will be placed on the ballot as amended.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 10:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue McKinnon
Town Clerk

